THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) Yes, Sir except in the areas where the pollution potential is high.

(b) As per the provisions of Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) Notification 1994, as amended *vide* S.O No. 801 (E) dated 7th July, 2004, new industrial estates including SEZs and EPZs above 50 hectares only have to obtain prior environmental clearance from the Central Government. However, if the pollution potential is high, all industrial estates irrespective of the area shall obtain environmental clearance under the said Notification.

(c) and (d) Does not arise.

Transfer of forest land to Travancore Devaswam Board

2947. DR. K. MALAISAMY: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the requisite stretch of forest land was transferred to Travancore Devaswam Board for the purpose of providing basic facilities like drinking water, sanitation, parking facilities, shelters, medical facilities, etc. to the pilgrims visiting Sabarimala shrine in the Pampa-Sannidhana area;

(b) what is the stage of providing such facilities if the land in question has already been given; and

(c) by when the whole process will be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) On the basis of the proposals received from the State Government of Kerala, the Central Government has diverted under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980, 110.524 hectares of forest land at Nilakkal and 12.675 hectares in Periyar Tiger Reserve for providing facilities like drinking water, sanitation, parking facilities, shelters etc. to the pilgrims and for development of Sabarimala Temple.

(b) and (c) In the above approvals, the Central Government has stipulated that all the activities in the diverted forest land shall be undertaken strictly according to the proposed Master Plan prepared by the State Government for development of Sabarimala Temple and that the forest land shall not be used for any purpose other than that specified in the Master Plan. Therefore,

creation of facilities for the pilgrims and other activities for development of Sabarimala Temple have to be co-terminus with the time period of the proposed Master Plan available with the State Government.

Census of wild animals in Jharkhand

†2948. SHRI AJAY MAROO: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether census of wild animals of important species including tiger has been carried out in Jharkhand on the direction of the Central Government;

(b) if so, the figures of this census; and

(c) the steps taken for protection of tiger and other wild animals of important species in Jharkhand?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) and (b) Phase-I of the All India estimation of tiger, co-predators and prey animals has been carried out in all tiger States including Jharkhand, using the refined methodology approved by the Tiger Task Force. Since the process requires completion of several other phases, indication of numbers is not possible at this stage.

(c) The steps taken by the Government of India to protect tigers and other wildlife are given in the Statement.

Statement

Steps taken by the Government for protection and conservation of tigers and other wildlife

(i) Legal protection has been provided to wild animals against hunting and commercial exploitation under the provisions of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972.

(ii) Several rare and endangered species of wild animals have been included in the Schedules of Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972, thereby giving it highest degree of protection.

(iii) The Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 has been amended and made more stringent. The punishment in cases of offences has been enhanced. The Act also provides for forfeiture of any

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.